



GROVE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

2012 Board Retreat

**HOSTED BY THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE AT
FOUNDATION FOR THE CAROLINAS**

2012

GROVE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION 2012 BOARD RETREAT

Background

On Saturday, July 14, 2012, the board members of the Grove Park Neighborhood Association participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at Foundation For The Carolinas. The following board members participated in the retreat.

- Richard Shawn
- Emily Wu
- Mimi Davis
- Maureen Gilewski
- Debra Tipton
- Maryann Williams



The City of Charlotte values citizen leadership and its ability to make an impact in the communities in which we all live, work, play and shop. With this in mind, the board retreat process was initiated to help neighborhood based organizations develop strategic plans to improve quality of life in their communities.

Purpose

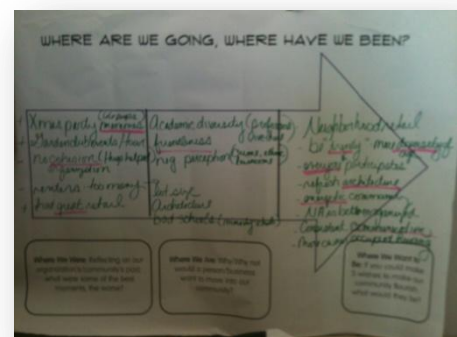
The purpose of the board retreat was to

- Generate meaningful conversations around improving quality of life in our community
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)
- Develop a vision and strategic priorities for our community

Our board identified the following outcomes for the retreat:

- Create Strategic Plan
- Identify Goals that are Actionable & Focused
- Improve Communication

By participating in the retreat, our board earned a \$1,500 Neighborhood Matching Grant credit to help execute one of the projects we identified.



Process

Our board retreat was conducted by an external facilitator, tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help us capture what was the best of the past, what is the best of the present, and how we can add to our strengths to build a better future.

The focus was:

- Developing a vision to guide our decision making and activities
- Developing strategic priorities that aligned with our vision
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Introductions
- Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?: Arrow Activity
- Where We Want to Be: Vision Statement Exercise
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Working Lunch – The Year Ahead
- Where's the Energy – Energygram Exercise
- Project Planning Worksheet Review

Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

We began our day with paired interviews, using the “Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?” activity. The activity was intended to help us reflect on:

- What we value
- What are the best things about our community and the people who live here
- What are our past successes
- Where are the potentials and possibilities

After interviewing out partners we shared our discussion with the group, finding commonalities in our conversations.



Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?	Where We Are: Why/why not would a person/business want to move into our community?	Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?
<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Christmas Party ○ Garden Club Events ○ Academic Diversity ○ Had Great Retail Locations <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Cohesion ○ Too Many Renters 	<p>Why</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Large Lots ○ Unique Architecture ○ Friendliness ○ Academic Diversity - Professors live here <p>Why Not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negative perceptions of crime, ethnicities and income levels ○ Bad Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Re-establish Neighborhood Retail ○ Increase Age Diversity ○ Increase participation/engage community ○ Refresh Architecture ○ Energize the Community ○ Consistent Communication ○ More Owner Occupied housing ○ Organized Neighborhood Association

Based on this activity, our group identified shared values that would help us craft the vision for our community:

- Ensure that Grove Park Continues to be a Great Place to Live
- Engage Neighbors
- Be Safe, Inclusive, Enthusiastic, Friendly, Active and Walkable
- Be Caring
- Have the Neighborhood Association Contribute to & Support Community Cohesion

Our Vision

Our vision is the unifying statement for our community that will guide our decision making and reminds us of what we are trying to reach. It is based on our shared values and preferences for our community's future. It combines the best of what was, what is, and what could be.

OUR VISION:

GROVE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION WILL PROVIDE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP WHICH ENCOURAGES SAFETY AND INCLUSIVITY IN A CARING, CREATIVE, AND INTERACTIVE MANNER ENSURING THAT GROVE PARK CONTINUES TO BE A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE.

Strategic Priorities

After committing to a shared vision, the board began to brainstorm on strategic priorities. This is where we began to define what is most important to us in order to achieve our vision. Strategic priorities are initiatives that will help us move closer to our vision of our community. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

We started out thinking big and then narrowed down our focus. We utilized the Affinity Mapping Process, detailed below:

- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Current realities keeping you from our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky notes on the chart paper.
- Organize the ideas by natural categories. Which ideas go together? Feel free to move any post-it note to another place. Move yours, move those of others, and feel free to do this. Do not be offended if someone moves yours to place where you feel it does not belong, just move it where you believe it goes.
- Once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.



This activity led us to the following categories:

- Parks and Common Open Space
- Communication
- Neighborhood Retail
- Neighborhood Association
- Social
- Schools
- Community Caring
- Partnerships
- Community Branding

The board then identified the three priorities that were most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision:



Potential Projects

The board then began to brainstorm on possible projects or activities that aligned with their strategic priorities:

— Parks and Common Open Space

- Open Undeveloped Property for Recreation
- Greenway Connection to Reedy Creek
- Host Nature Walks
- Add Bike Paths
- Host Bird Feeder Workshops
- Provide public access to lakes

— Communication

- Translate Newsletter into other Languages & Expand its
- Reactivate Website
- Publicize Neighborhood Resource List
- Create Welcome Wagon
- Encourage Payment of Dues
- Be More Focused
- Better Relationships with Grid Captains
- Encourage Media to Report “Good News”

— Neighborhood Retail

- Develop Relationships with Local Retailers
- Encourage Better Retail (coffee shop, wine bar)
- Encourage Retailers to Help Beautify the Area

— Neighborhood Association

- Improve Meeting Format- More Exciting, Have Speakers, Door Prizes, Outdoor Movies
- Create Sub-Groups

— Social

- Increase Social Events
- Decorate for Holidays
- Strengthen Connections between Sections of Community- “Lake Communities”
- Establish Block Projects & Parties
- Expand National Night Out

— Schools

- Improve Schools– Tutoring, Event Volunteers

— Community Caring

- Litter Patrol
- Support Neighbors In Need- Chore Corps, Service Projects for Kids

— Partnerships

- Active Partnership with E.A.S.T.



— **Partnerships (cont.)**

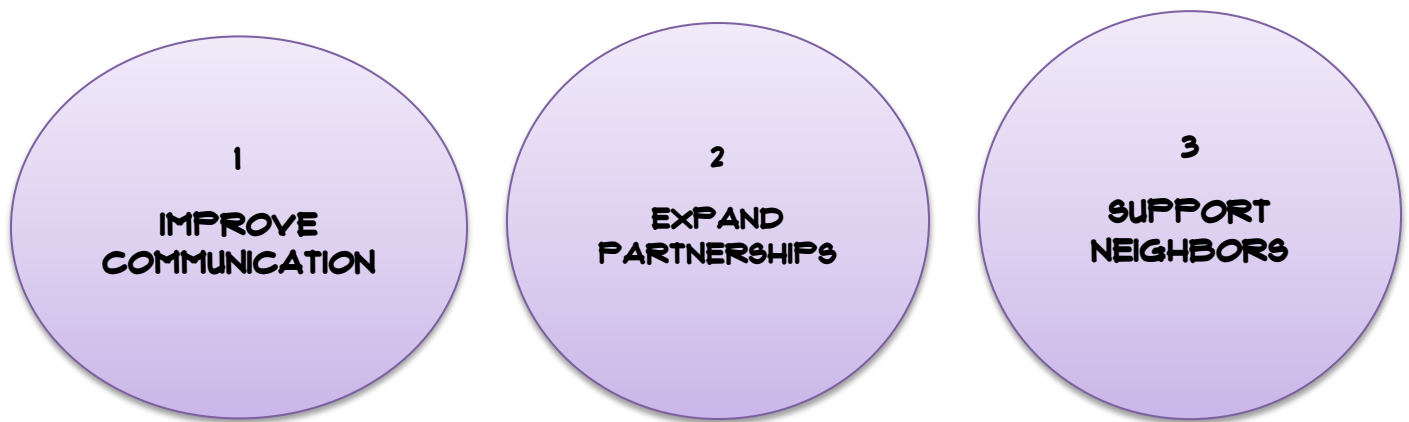
- Communicate with Other NA's
- Seek Grants
- Realtor Groups-Prepare Info Packages, Work together
- Other Opportunities-Rogers Builders, Hickory Grove Methodist, The Grove Presbyterian, Neighborhood Merchants, Hickory Grove Baptist, UNCC, CPCC Cato.

— **Branding**

- Trendy Entrance Monumentation-Increase Visibility

Action Items for 2012-2014

After identifying potential projects, the board voted on one project to pursue for each strategic priority in 2012-2014:



OUR VISION:

GROVE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION WILL PROVIDE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP WHICH ENCOURAGES SAFETY AND INCLUSIVITY IN A CARING, CREATIVE, AND INTERACTIVE MANNER ENSURING THAT GROVE PARK CONTINUES TO BE A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE.

TO HELP US REACH OUR VISION; WE WILL FOCUS ON THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.

IN 2012-2014, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

